

### **III. Citizen's Participation Process.**

The information gathering process for this Consolidated Plan began almost two years ago when the City began its update of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI). During the public meetings, outreach sessions, and individual and group consultations that occurred from spring 1998 to December 1999, strategies were developed for the nature and conduct of formal Consolidated Plan working sessions, outreach efforts, and consultations. This included the compilation of a list of persons and groups who should be included in the outreach process.

The formal citizens' participation process began with meetings before the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC) on December 8 and 15, 1999 and a noticed public hearing before City Council on January 11, 2000. At those hearings, the Plan process was initiated and a program for plan development and adoption was approved. (See Appendix A, Consolidated Plan Process.) During this same period, several individuals and organizations were also asked for feedback regarding the proposed process and schedule.

It was determined that the best method for gathering community input was to:

- Conduct a series of working sessions with individuals and groups.
- Augment HUD required public hearings with monthly status reports at HCDC meetings.
- Contact individuals, agencies, nonprofits and other groups by phone to gather information and to encourage participation in working sessions.
- Mail information on the Plan process to individuals, agencies, nonprofits and other groups.
- Request written information, such as brochures, hand-outs, reports and statistics on needs and services provided, from service providers such as schools, housing nonprofits, homeless shelters, and groups advocating for persons with disabilities.
- Prepare and distribute an information gathering worksheet which asked for statistical information as well as more subjective input on community needs, priorities, and potential actions needed to meet Fresno's housing and community development challenges.
- Meet with the Citizen's Advisory Committee (representatives from lower income neighborhoods) and ask them to assist with the gathering of information from the twelve neighborhoods that they represent.

The City implemented all of these citizens' participation strategies. More than 100 individuals from more than 140 invited agencies, neighborhood associations, nonprofit service providers and other groups participated in one of seventeen facilitated working

sessions conducted between January 10 and January 19, 2000 (See Appendix E - Partial List of Organizations Consulted). These groups included representatives from business, schools, City and County government, land use organizations, insurance, banking, housing, minority, homeless, and other advocacy organizations, and social service provider agencies.

Participants were asked to review already identified obstacles to meeting housing and community development needs, and advise the City of any other obstacles that should be considered. They were also asked to suggest actions and strategies needed to address those needs. Participants were encouraged to take copies of session materials to distribute to, or discuss, with others. (See Appendix B, Consolidated Plan 90 Minute Working Sessions, Action Agenda and Worksheets)

Meetings to discuss issues and receive feedback from the Citizen's Advisory Committee were held on January 19 and February 16, 2000. Two grant applications' technical assistance workshops were provided on February 3 and 4, followed by application preparation clinics on February 11 and 17.

Meetings were conducted by the Housing and Community Development Commission on December 8 and 15, 1999, January 26, March 8, and 29, and April 12, 2000. Noticed public hearings before the HCDC occurred on March 22 and April 26. The April 26 meeting focused upon comments on the draft Consolidated Plan. The City Council conducted noticed public hearings on January 11 and May 16. (See Appendix F, Public Hearing Notices)

The Draft Consolidated Plan was issued on April 12, 2000. The public review period ended on May 16, 2000. The Plan was revised to respond to input received. The Final Plan was issued on May 31, 2000, and forwarded to HUD for approval on June 1, 2000.